

ALL IN COLOUR - MAKES LEARNING A JOY

# Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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# Tiny Tom Thumb



1. Brought by the fairies to the home of a farmer and his wife, tiny Tom Thumb soon grew used to being there. He wore clothes made by the fairies and always remembered to wear the little magic sword which they had given him. Being so small, he could not play with other children, but he had fun with a pretty kitten.



2. For a while Tom Thumb was quite happy, but kittens do not play in the same way as humans. After he had been scratched a few times Tom gave up the game and, being a little bored, looked round for something else to do. "I will try and find out what my mother is so busily doing on the table-top," he thought.



3. Tom's mother was going to make a cake and she had a bowlful of cake-mixture which she was stirring with a large spoon. Then as Tom scrambled up a chair to the level of the table-top there was a knock on the door of the cottage. "Who can that be?" said the farmer's wife. "What a nuisance—in the middle of my mixing."



4. However, she stopped stirring and laid the spoon against the side of the bowl so that it sloped upwards. "That is just the very thing to help me to see what is inside the bowl," chuckled Tom Thumb, determined to satisfy his curiosity. "I can climb up quite easily." And up he went, using the spoon as a staircase.





5. Tom was very pleased with his own cleverness, but there is a true saying that "pride comes before a fall". What he did not notice was that the spoon was balanced on the side of the mixing-bowl in such a way that when he trotted to the end of it, it tipped down like a see-saw and he toppled right into the bowl.



6. Poor Tom Thumb! He sank down into the sticky cake-mixture and was covered by it from head to foot. He wriggled and moved but could not open his mouth to give even the smallest shout. And when his mother came back from answering the door, her eyes popped open in surprise at the sight of something in the cake-mixture!



7. She was quite frightened by the look of it. "Oh dear, how horrid," she said, thinking it might be a mouse or a giant spider which had got into the bowl. "I can't have that sort of thing in one of my cakes." So picking up the blob of wriggling cake-mixture she went to the window and dropped it out.



8. The blob fell in the stream outside. As it sank through the water, most of it washed off Tom, who was scared of finding himself in deep water and struggled to swim to the surface. But as Tom did so, a big fish saw the movement. Thinking it was something tasty to eat, the fish made straight for Tom with its big mouth open.

**See what happens next week when Tom Thumb is swallowed by the big fish!**





1. **Raven.** The biggest of the crow family is the Raven. Its harsh croak is unpleasant, but it is a good mimic and can often imitate other birds. For centuries, tame Ravens have been kept at the Tower of London.



2. **Magpie.** The graceful Magpies hop about on the ground, looking for insects, or other birds' eggs, to eat. Magpies are clever and young ones can be tamed and kept as pets. They can even be taught a few words.



# All Sorts



5. **Rook.** A group of large, black birds wheeling across the sky, cawing harshly, is likely to be a flock of Rooks. Their nests, all built together in the top of a group of trees, are called a rookery.



6. **Hooded Crow.** The Hooded Crow has a black head, but grey back and underparts. It eats anything, from seeds to small animals. Its nest is high up in a tall tree and the bird often returns to it for a number of years.





3. **Jay.** The Jay is gay and colourful but very shy. It spends most of its time in the trees. It likes seeds and nuts to eat, especially acorns which it collects and buries as food for Winter.



4. **Jackdaw.** The Jackdaws are easy to tame and make amusing pets, but they love bright, shiny things, like rings, which they will often steal and hide in their nest. Their loud, harsh call sounds like "jack".

# of Crows



7. **Carrion Crow.** Carrion Crows get their name because they will eat dead animals—known as 'carrion'. They eat all kinds of other things, mice, rats, frogs, fruit and seeds, as well. They are seen in both town and country.



8. **Chough.** The little Chough (say "chuff"), with its glossy black feathers and red legs and beak, is a rare bird and not often seen. It hides itself away among cliffs and mountains, where it builds its nest.





# BREXER RABBIT

**Crocodiles and Pirates. By Barbara Hayes.**

**N**OW once upon a time, back in the old days, when the animals were still friendly, one with another, they took the idea of building themselves a boat.

It was not a grand boat to sail out to sea, but a flat-bottomed friendly boat—just the sort for picnics on the river.

So they all set to work chopping the trees and nailing the planks and painting

the wood, until at last a pretty fine, cosy boat was finished.

Then one sunny afternoon, they filled a hamper with picnic goodies and prepared to go for a picnic up the river.

Brer Wolf got into the boat and Brer Bear got into the boat and Brer Fox got into the boat, but when it was Brer Rabbit's turn to get into the boat—there was no room left.

"Well, hard luck, Brer Rabbit," laughed the other three animals. "You can't come."

"But I helped to build the boat. How come one of you isn't left behind to make room for me?" asked Brer Rabbit.

"Because we got here first," they sneered.

"Well if I can't come, you could at least leave a share of the picnic behind for me



to eat," said Brer Rabbit.

"If you go on complaining, we'll eat you for our picnic before we go," grinned the other animals.

And with that they pushed off from the bank and Brer Rabbit had to walk sadly home.

But Brer Rabbit wasn't the chap to be beaten as easily as that, I can tell you.

First he went home to fetch his baby rabs and their dressing-up clothes. Then he raced with them higher up the river to where his friend Brer Terrapin lived. And on the way he picked up some green paint and some black paint from the shed of Mr. Man.

Then Brer Rabbit took some old logs and painted them green with two black dots for eyes. When he had finished, the logs looked just like crocodiles.

He tied the logs together with string and gave the string to Brer Terrapin.

"When you hear me shouting, swim under the water and tow these logs and bang them against the boat that Brer Bear and Brer Wolf and Brer Fox are rowing down there," said Brer Rabbit.

Well, by and by, sailing round the

corner of the river came the new boat.

The minute it appeared, Brer Rabbit leapt up and down on the bank shouting:

"Crocodiles! Beware! Beware! There are crocodiles in the river."

And at the same moment Brer Terrapin pushed the painted logs against the boat—*bonk—bonk!*

Then he slid under the boat with them and banged them against the other side—*bonk—bonk—bonk!*

Brer Bear and Brer Wolf and Brer Fox were terrified.

"Crocodiles!" they gasped. "Crocodiles!"

"I can hear their sharp teeth grating," shivered Brer Wolf.

"I can hear their jaws chomping," quavered Brer Bear.

"I want to go home," shouted Brer Fox.

Then Brer Rabbit gave a signal to his little rabs who had all dressed up to look like pirates. They flitted about between the trees farther up the river and shouted out:

"Heave-ho, me hearties. Here come the bold, bad pirates! Shiver me timbers!

Look out! We're after you land-lubbers."

And they waved toy swords that shone in the sun, just like real ones.

And Brer Rabbit called across to the animals in the boat:

"The pirates are after you. Quick! Pull the boat to the side of the river and I will go in it and fight the pirates while you run away home."

By this time Brer Bear and Brer Wolf and Brer Fox were so scared that they were only too ready to do just as Brer Rabbit said, especially when Brer Terrapin banged the wooden crocodiles against the side of the boat again—*bonk—bonk!*

So for the rest of the afternoon, Brer Rabbit and his baby rabs and Brer Terrapin had the boat to themselves. What a lovely time they had gliding up the river and eating the picnic.

Brer Bear and Brer Wolf and Brer Fox didn't stop running till they were safely hiding under their own beds.

**There will be another Brer Rabbit story next week.**





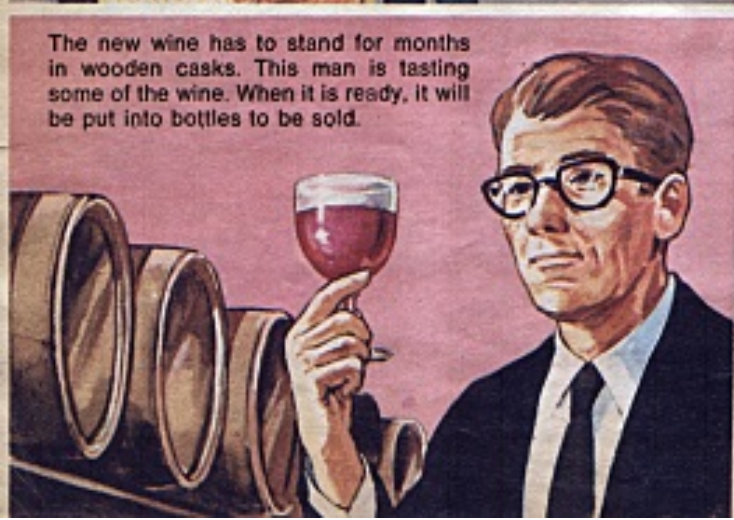
# The Grape Harvest



Grapes are put in a big press and crushed to get out the juice. This is used to make wine, which is put into casks.



The new wine has to stand for months in wooden casks. This man is tasting some of the wine. When it is ready, it will be put into bottles to be sold.



Grapes need plenty of sun but little rain, so they grow best in hot countries like France and Spain. Many are sold in the shops to eat, but many are also dried. Then they become the raisins, currants and sultanas which we use in our cakes and puddings.





# FAMOUS NAMES

Interesting facts about people, places and things in our world.



1. **The Lagoon of Venice.** At one time about 120 tiny islands made up the Lagoon of Venice. These islands were used to build what is now the great city of Venice, in Northern Italy. It was a wonderful feat of building. This lovely city has about 170 canals running through it and no less than 400 foot-bridges.



2. **Epeluis, the Greek carpenter.** Many people think that the wooden horse of Troy was built by Ulysses, but this is not so. A clever Greek carpenter named Epeluis took men to cut down trees on Mount Ida and they built the famous horse in three days. It was, however, Ulysses who thought of hiding soldiers inside.



3. **The Pilgrim Fathers.** Many of them left England to settle in Holland, but there they found it hard to make a living, so in 1620 some of them sailed for America in the ship "Mayflower".



4. **The Duke of Wellington.** Best remembered for winning the famous Battle of Waterloo and defeating Napoleon, the Duke of Wellington became Prime Minister of Britain from 1828 to 1830.



This story is a Memory Test. Read it carefully and then turn to page 16 and try to answer the questions there.

# The Gay Gipsies

The day's work is done and around the open fire a group of people has gathered. They are black-haired and brown-skinned and they look weather-beaten, because they spend most of their lives out-of-doors.

The girls are dancing and singing to the lively accompaniment of the young men playing the accordion and the guitar. Their brightly coloured dresses swirl around them in the firelight, as they circle, stamping to the gay music. How they are enjoying themselves. The children are dozing and the old woman dreams of far-away places. These people have their own dances, their own music and songs and even their own language, for they are Romany gipsies and belong to one of the oldest races in the world. There are about six million Romany gipsies and they are found in most countries.

People who have studied the Romany language think they must have come from India, but for centuries no one knew where they had come from. They wandered across Europe, travelling from place to place and never settling anywhere. Some of the gipsies said they had come from Egypt and many people believed them. They called them Egyptians, or Gipsies, for short.

In some countries the gipsies were made welcome, in others they were badly treated. King James the Fifth of Scotland liked the gipsies so much that whenever he could, he would leave the affairs of his kingdom to travel around with them, in disguise. In return, he invited them to his palace in Edinburgh, to sing and dance for him.

In the 18th century, gipsy fiddlers were very famous. Countries like Austria and Hungary needed big armies and sergeants were sent round towns and villages to persuade the young men to become soldiers. With them went gipsy fiddlers, who played gay, exciting music which made the young men want to join the army.

When the soldiers went into battle, the gipsy fiddlers went too, playing stirring music. When the fighting started, they fought fiercely, with the soldiers.

Many gipsies live in gaily-painted caravans. They live on the food they find in the country—fish, rabbits and hares, roasted hedgehogs and fruit. They cook over open wood fires, and in the evenings they make wooden pegs and gay paper flowers to sell in the towns. Romanies are also supposed to have the power to tell fortunes. They can do this by looking at your palm, this is called "reading" a palm. Sometimes they have been said to foresee the future just by looking at a person. Their way of life has hardly changed for centuries.









# The Little Singing Frog



1. Once upon a time, many years ago in Yugoslavia, a farmer's wife said to her husband, "How nice it would be if we had our own baby to look after. Any kind of child would do. I would be thankful for a boy or girl, even if he or she looked like a frog."



2. Next morning, the farmer and his wife went downstairs to their kitchen and were amazed to find a little girl, wrapped in a shawl. The little girl had the face of a frog but this did not worry them. "At last we have our very own daughter," they smiled.



3. As the years passed by, the little girl with the face of a frog liked to be alone and often sat in a tree, singing, as her father worked the land. She had such a beautiful voice that before long, her parents called her "The Little Singing Frog".



4. One day the son of the ruler passed by. "Who is singing so beautifully?" he asked. The farmer shrugged, not wanting his daughter to be seen in case the young man laughed at the sight of her face. "I don't hear any singing, sir," he replied.





5. "But I have already fallen in love with the owner of that beautiful voice," said the ruler's son. "Please let me see her." So the farmer was persuaded and he was also surprised that the young man still loved Little Singing Frog when he saw her.



6. Little Singing Frog was told to go to the Palace on the next day and take with her a flower. But instead she picked an ear of golden wheat, then rode to the Palace on a white cockerel. "Go back to your muddy pond, Frog-face," said the Royal guards.



7. But as the golden rays of the sun shone on the ear of wheat and were reflected into the face of Little Singing Frog, a truly wonderful thing happened. Her face changed to that of a lovely young lady and everybody was struck by her beauty when she went in.



8. "What a lovely and thoughtful young lady—she brings with her an ear of wheat, because she knows what is useful and valuable," said the ruler. So he allowed Little Singing Frog to marry his son and they lived for many, many happy years.





## Beautiful Paintings

Those of you who have been getting "Once Upon A Time" each week may remember that a few months ago we printed a lovely portrait painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence of a girl wearing a pink bonnet and sash. She was called "Pinkie" and she made such a delightful picture that many of you cut it out to put in a

scrapbook of Beautiful Paintings. Here is another portrait by the same artist, who was born in 1769, just over two hundred years ago. It will make a lovely partner to the portrait of "Pinkie". It is called "Lord Seaham as a Boy". Don't you think it is a beautiful painting?



# The Crusader

In a recent issue of "Once Upon A Time" we told you about the olden days when the city of Jerusalem and other places in the Holy Land were captured by the Saracens. From Britain and Europe, men were sent out to fight and re-capture these places. It was these men who were called Crusaders. On their shields they carried the emblem of the cross.

By joining the dots of this puzzle from 1 to 38, you will complete the picture of a leader of the Saracens.







# The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

The Country Mouse's home in danger — part 2. By Barbara Hayes.

It was a few days after the two mice had been to Winifred's cottage and told her that it had to be knocked down to make way for a new road, that Winifred had an important letter.

Mr. Badger the postman brought the letter to Winifred's door and he hung about to see her open and read it.

"It says on the outside that the letter is from County Hall," he said in hushed tones. "County Hall is that big building in the middle of Nutsford. They send the money for my wages from there and it's very important."

Winifred opened the letter and then she felt rather cold inside.

The letter was typed, with all sorts of printed words at the top and bottom, and it said that her cottage was in the way of a new road and that it would have to be knocked down.

"We will pay you what we think your cottage is worth," went on the letter, "and you will have to find somewhere else to live. If you have any objections send them to us within a fortnight."

Winifred was terribly upset. She flopped forlornly into a chair.

"Objections! What funny people they must be who wrote this letter," she whispered to herself. "If my home is going to be knocked down, of course I have objections."

By this time kind Mr. Badger had fetched Winifred's boyfriend, Bertie.

Bertie held Winifred's hand and said, "Don't worry about a thing, our Winifred. I will write a letter straight away packed full of all the objections we can think of and then I will cycle over to Nutsford with it and take it to the County Hall and I'm sure that will be the end of all this nonsense."

Winifred felt better at once. And in no time good old Bertie had written the letter and cycled to the County Hall.

But when he got there, no one would see him.

The doorman just told him to wait. Then after two whole hours a very

young unimportant-looking mouse came and read the letter.

He didn't even seem to have heard of Winifred, but he took the letter and said, "Oh, I'll put it in the pile of letters to do with the new road. Perhaps the mayor might be able to glance at it in a day or two, but the road will go on being built just the same, you know."

Bertie was furious, but he could see that he could do no good at the County Hall. Everyone there just took one look at his country clothes and scarcely bothered to be polite to him.

Then just as he was leaving, a big car drew up with a man inside it wearing fine clothes and a silk top hat. Immediately the doorman stood to attention and saluted and important-looking people rushed out of the offices to ask what the well-dressed man wanted.

And that got Bertie to thinking.

He got on his little cycle and pedalled away towards the home of the town mouse, Stephanie.

"After all," he thought, "Stephanie and her boyfriend, Nigel, were always well dressed. In fact, Stephanie scarcely thought about anything else but being better dressed than all her friends."

He was so excited and pleased with himself for having such a clever idea that he almost overbalanced in his haste.

When he arrived he leant his cycle against the gate and hurried in.

"Hallo, Bertie, you do look flushed. Is anything wrong?" Stephanie asked, opening the door.

"Yes, there certainly is," he replied breathlessly. Then he told Stephanie everything that had happened at County Hall.

Bertie had thought that Stephanie and Nigel were the people to help and he was right.

When Stephanie heard the story she drew herself up and said: "No one is going to knock down the home of anyone in my family. What a cheek! Why with all the empty fields round Winifred's house,

the road could easily go somewhere else.

"I'm going to come down to the country and find out all about what is going on and by the time those horrid planning people in Nutsford are finished they will wish they had never heard of Winifred's cottage."

"Nigel—get out your best car and put on your newest suit of clothes. I will wear my prettiest dress and grandest hat."

"All right, Stephanie," Nigel replied, and hurried off. Then Stephanie turned to Bertie again.

"Bertie! You cycle back and tell Winifred that we are coming to the rescue and that she needn't worry about another thing."

Next week you can read how Stephanie gets the better of the Mayor of Nutsford.

Here are some questions from the story "The Gay Gipsies" on page 10. See if you can answer them.

1. Where do people think the Romany gipsies must have come from?
2. Why were they called gipsies?
3. Which king liked to travel with the gipsies in disguise?
4. How did gipsy fiddlers help the soldiers?

## YOUR EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello, Boys and Girls!

I had to have a chuckle to myself when I read the story of Brer Rabbit this week. What an artful young scamp he is to get the better of the bigger animals by means of his clever crocodile trick. Here are some of Brer Rabbit's own riddles, which could not be put on his story page:

1. When are boys and girls like nails?
2. What is always hot, even in the coldest weather?

Your friend,

The Editor

Answers to Brer Rabbit's Riddles:

1. When they are in-doors.
2. Mustard.







# ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves

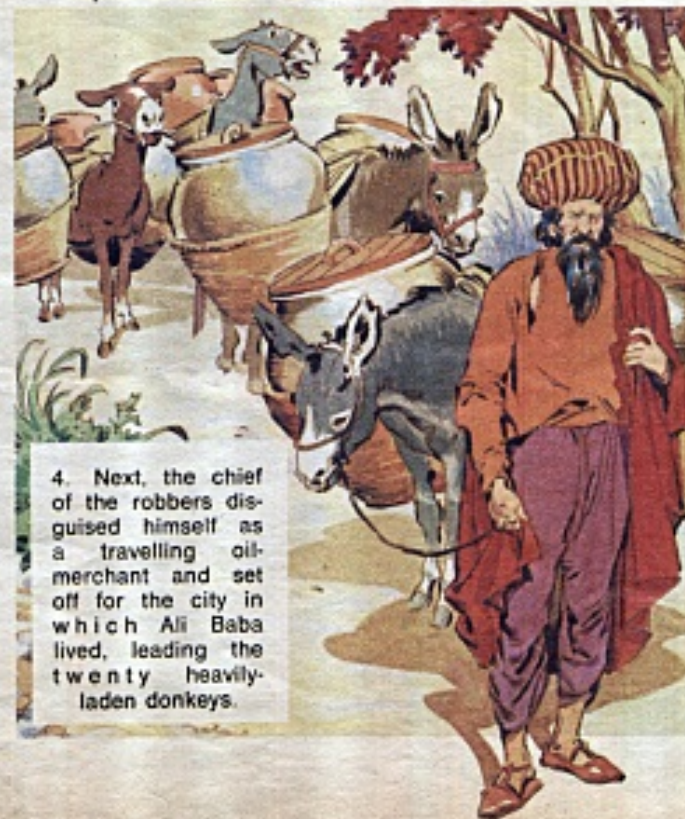


1. By a clever trick, pretending to be a dealer in old clothes, the leader of the forty thieves had discovered the house where Ali Baba lived. "Excellent!" he chuckled and he hurried back to where the other thirty-nine thieves were waiting for him in the forest. "Listen carefully and do what I tell you," he said.

2. Some time later, the robbers returned to their chief and now they had with them twenty donkeys and forty big jars, the kind of jars which in those olden days were used for storing oil. "Now for the next part of my plan," smiled the robber chieftain. "It will be a sure way for us to catch the man who knows about our cave."



3. Only one of the big jars was filled with oil. Then, on the orders of the leader, the thirty-nine thieves took a jar each and clambered in. "Good!" chuckled the robber. "You cannot be seen."



4. Next, the chief of the robbers disguised himself as a travelling oil-merchant and set off for the city in which Ali Baba lived, leading the twenty heavily-laden donkeys.





5. Knowing that Ali Baba might possibly have seen him near the secret cave, the robber chief was careful to put on a long false beard. When he knocked at Ali Baba's door he was not recognised. "I have come far today," sighed the chief. "Would you give me shelter for the night?" "You are welcome to stay as my guest," answered Ali Baba.



6. "Thank you, good sir," said the cunning chieftain. "I will see that you get your proper reward." "There is no need for that," said Ali Baba, who was very good-natured. He ordered a servant to help unload the oil jars from the donkeys. "The jars will be safe in my courtyard and the donkeys may spend the night in my stables and get a good rest," said Ali Baba—and this was just what the clever robber chief had planned.



7. Because he was a man who never thought badly of anyone, Ali Baba did not suspect that his guest was anything other than an oil-merchant, such as he appeared to be. And so, after the donkeys had been stabled, Ali Baba ordered a splendid meal to be prepared for himself and the bearded stranger. "You are most welcome to share my home," he said.

8. When the meal was over, the robber chieftain made a pretence of being very grateful to Ali Baba. "You are a man of kind thoughts," he said. "And now I must be like yourself and spare a kind thought for my hard-working donkeys. It is my wish to make sure that they are comfortable for the night." Excusing himself thus, the chief hurried out. But he went into the courtyard and not to the stables. "When you hear pebbles dropping that is the signal to attack," he whispered to his hidden men.

Will the Forty Thieves' plot succeed? More of this lovely story next week.







# The WISE OLD OWL

## Knows all the answers

The Wise Old Owl gives you the answers to some interesting and puzzling questions.



### 1. How many Red Indians are there now in North America?

"There are many stories about the early days of the Wild West when the white settlers moved across North America to find a new home and met the many tribes of Red Indians. When a count was made in 1960, there were 523,591 Red Indians in the U.S.A. and 137,000 in Canada."



### 2. Which bird can fly the highest?

"A Chough (a bird of the crow family) was once seen on Mount Everest 26,000 feet up from the ground. Another high-flying bird is the Lammergeier, or Bearded Vulture, called a 'bone-breaker'. It drops bones from great heights to split them open."



### 3. Why do we become giddy if we spin round and round?

"If we are spun round and round, such as happens in a game of blind man's bluff, we upset the balancing mechanism inside the ears and become dizzy and find it hard to stop falling. We can put this right by spinning in the opposite direction."



### 4. Why do people wear white clothes in hot countries?

"Because they wish to keep as cool as possible when the sun is very hot. Things that are white reflect the sunshine and throw it back. Dark colours absorb the heat from the sun."



### 5. Why is a field of rice called a paddy-field?

"People living in Eastern countries grow and eat plenty of rice. Planting is done in flooded paddy-fields—and the name comes from the Malay word 'padi' which means rice in the husk."